

At this and some which could be  
 secured by CD. having his own staff of  
 cyphers; abroad I fear the F.O. may say their  
 existing staff already has as much as it can do.

FROM C.D.

CD/XX/879

910

NEW YORK

3.3.41.

1603

4.3.41.

0700 G.S.T.

CKG 926

FOLLOWING FOR S.O.2. FROM U.

A. PLEASE LOCATE WILLIAM G. AIRY REPEAT AIRY, FORMERLY OF  
 SCHWAB AND SNELLING NOW IN ROYAL AIR FORCE.

B. HE IS KNOWN TO AB, 848 AND HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

C. I EXPECT TO NEED HIM URGENTLY.

D. PLEASE MAKE PRELIMINARY ENQUIRIES.

E. IF THERE IS DANGER OF HIS BECOMING NOT AVAILABLE PLEASE  
 ENGAGE OR RESERVE HIM.

F. IF POSSIBLE I SHOULD PREFER NOT TO ENGAGE HIM DEFINITELY UNTIL  
 RETURN.

C.D.	ADB	
Min.	L	
A.D.	WAD	
A.D. 1.		
DIT	W. H. W.	
C/Sec.	PA	
Army		
Navy		
Air		
U		

At this end some relief could be  
secured by C.D. having his own staff of  
cypherers; abroad I fear the F.O. may say their  
existing staff already has as much as it can do.

From C.D.

CD/XL/879

To Mr. JEBB

9th March 1941.

2 papers.

S.O.2 Communications through C.

1. You are - to my great content - going to take up the question with the Foreign Office in the near future as to whether some at any rate of our more urgent telegrams can be handled by the Foreign Office.
2. This is of course only a very small portion of the problem which S.O.2 is now contending with in respect of its communications generally, with especial reference to the arbitrary supervision which C. exercises over such communications.
3. I want to be absolutely fair and dispassionate in reviewing this question and one must always remember that the inception of these communications through C. took place when D. Branch, as it was then entitled, was a small subsidiary branch of the main organisation, viz. C.
4. In these circumstances, and having regard to the conditions which quickly grew up under my predecessor, it was a wholesome and necessary check on his activities.
5. The organisation S.O.2, as it now stands, has of course grown out of all recognition as compared with the D. Section in August 1940 when I took it over, and the volume of telegrams (and incidentally their importance) has probably trebled, if not quadrupled.
6. Whilst there is no direct evidence - human nature being what it is - there is no shadow of doubt in my mind that C. telegrams take complete preference over S.O.2, notwithstanding whether the latter are marked Z, ZZ, ZZZ. At the present time it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that our telegraphic communications through C. have broken down almost completely and the average length of time it takes a telegram to reach us from the Balkans or the Middle East is about four days; if marked ZZZ we may hope to get it in twenty four hours or perhaps forty eight.
7. The main reason for this is the inadequacy of the staff of cypherers and decypherers at 54 Broadway - and in view of the many and repeated warnings which you yourself have heard me give to C. in regard to the certain increase in the volume of our telegraphic traffic, there is no doubt in my mind that they stand convicted of not having made sufficient preparation to meet eventualities.
8. There is however a great deal more to this question than the delay in telegraphic communications.

9. By means of S.O.2 telegraphic traffic coming through 54 Broadway, a type of inquisitive censorship over the whole of our actions has been set up by the C. organisation and it is not an infrequent occurrence to have our outward telegrams held up while they are discussed departmentally in C., and alternatively to have the inward delivery delayed pending similar discussion.

10. In regard to W/T sets - a so vitally important part of S.O.2 equipment now that country after country is being over-run by Germany - a dictatorial supervision is exercised by C., who take up the attitude:-

- a) that we must only obtain W/T sets through them;
- b) that we can only send these W/T sets to our men in the field through the C. men in that part of the world;
- c) that these sets are not to be put into use without the permission of C;
- d) that no other W/T sets are to be used, whatever the circumstances may be, in any part of the world, whether between overseas and England or between Stations overseas without express permission of C.

11. There are almost daily occurrences which cause recrimination and dispute between the two organisations based on all the above facts - but the underlying threat throughout all such discussions - whether amicable or otherwise - is that our communications have to go through C. and that if we do not behave ourselves they will withhold them.

12. It is of course emphasising the obvious to say that they would not succeed in any endeavour to withhold communications - nevertheless the C.S.S. himself has on more than one occasion reiterated to me that he considers himself entitled to decline to send any telegram from S.O.2 through his communications with which he does not agree.

13. My own view is that the time has come to take this whole matter up with Sir Alec Cadogan -

- a) firstly, to ascertain what volume of our communications the Foreign Office could probably handle;
- b) to endeavour to get a re-statement of the position of arbitrary supervision which C. claim they are at present entitled to exercise over S.O.2 communications.

14. I look upon C. as the "Common Carrier", so to speak, appointed by Government to carry S.O.2 communications and I deny absolutely that they have any power to exercise the arbitrary discipline to which we now have to submit if we want to get our telegrams sent or received at all.

15. It is only right that you should at this juncture refresh your memory by re-reading the Charter (to which I was a party of course) agreed between C. and D., as it then was, early last September.

16. The C.S.S. was too clever for us (prompted thereto no doubt by ), for neither you nor I were sufficiently acquainted with S.O.2 matters at that juncture to realise what we were doing when we gave him the powers which he has in that Charter.

17. I feel very strongly that we should get that Charter re-charted and that we should endeavour to persuade the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to inform the S.I.S. that it is the wish of H.M.G. that they should handle such part of S.O.2 telegraphic communications as may be desired by the latter - and which the circumstances of C. will permit - and that they should act in this matter precisely on the same basis as the Post Office acts for Government Departments and the general public. In regard to all other matters, such as W/T sets etc., S.O.2 should have a completely free hand and not be subjected to the arbitrary supervision which is so irksome to us at present; the reasons for such supervision given to us by Gambier-Parry are, I am assured by Squadron-Leader Pyle our own expert, largely staged for the benefit of the uninitiated, and except on broad general lines are neither true nor operative.

18. I suggest as the first step that perhaps you could take me with you to talk to Alec Cadogan on this matter in a personal and private sense so that we may give him the atmosphere - for looking ahead I can foresee only growing trouble in this subjection of our own people to Gambier-Parry (noted for his inaccuracy and non-adherence to the truth), who is the real trouble as Head of the C. Technical Section; presumably our traffic will increase and our general needs grow wider and wider and before very long, if present conditions continue, we shall find ourselves in an almost inextricable dilemma.

C. D.



5th April 1941

THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT  
RETAINED IN DEPARTMENT  
UNDER SECTION 3(1) OF  
THE PUBLIC RECORDS  
ACT 1958.

COS(41) 142<sup>nd</sup> meeting

21 April 1941



5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

IMMEDIATE  
MOST SECRET

21st April, 1941.

You will remember that you asked us to be in a position to give, at the meeting this afternoon, a short statement of the achievements of S.O.2 since the inception of that organisation.

*See in box file  
- Progress Reports*

We thought it would be useful to put this statement in writing and I therefore enclose five copies of the document which we have prepared. Do you think it would be possible to get copies circulated urgently to the Vice-Chiefs before the meeting? We shall of course be in a position to elaborate orally where necessary.

(Sgd) PHILIP BROAD

Colonel L.C.Hollis, R.M.,  
Offices of the War Cabinet.

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.



SECRET.

OFFICES OF THE WAR CABINET  
AND OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE,  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
S.W.1.

19 APR 1941  
W/-

19th April, 1941.

*See Board.*

In confirmation of our telephone conversation of this morning, I hope you and whoever you wish to bring with you may be able to attend the meeting with the Vice Chiefs of Staff on Monday, 21st April, to discuss the points raised in Jebb's letter to Ismay No. W.1951 of the 12th April.

The Vice Chiefs of Staff have been informed of the gist of Jebb's letter and they have suggested that, to enable them to form a judgment on the questions raised in paragraph 10, it would be very helpful if they could be given a brief statement of the achievements of S.O.2. This will place them in a better position to decide on priorities.

The meeting will be at 5.30 p.m. at Great George Street, Conference Room 'B'.

*Members required to this*

*E. Smoot*  
*L. C. H. M.*

P. Broad, Esq.,  
Ministry of Economic Warfare.

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

SECRET  
W/2018

18th April, 1941.

From C.B.

CH/XX/118

To C.B.O.

18th April 1941

Many thanks for your letter of the 15th April about communications. As soon as I got it I told Joe Hollis on the telephone that we would certainly welcome a meeting of the Vice Chiefs-of-Staff and, from our point of view, the sooner it was held the better.

1. Herewith is a copy of a memorandum I have written. I myself am going on about a week's leave tonight, but no doubt it would be possible to have it some time next week when Nelson would be available. A good way on with all our arrangements for founding our Coding Section, and that in any case alternative means are always desirable to have. (Sgd) GLADWIN-JEBB  
days.

2. We might perhaps discuss the exact terms of my reply tomorrow morning.

C. B.

Major-General Sir H.L. Ismay, K.C.B., D.S.O.,  
Offices of the War Cabinet.

*11/18 C/O this morning that C.B.  
and with action of reply prepared.*



5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

16 APR 1941

w/-

*Not yet seen by Mr Broad.*

16 APR 1941

w/-

From C.D.

CD/XX/118

To C.E.O.

16th April 1941

Communications.

1. Herewith is a copy of a memorandum I have received from C.!!
2. I think our reply should be that we are already a good way on with all our arrangements for founding our Coding Section, and that in any case alternative means are always desirable to have in these uncertain days.
3. We might perhaps discuss the exact terms of my reply tomorrow morning.

C. D.

*I told C/D this morning that C.E.O.  
agreed with nature of reply proposed.*

*x D.D. 18/4*

hem  
nds.

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

*under*  
16 APR 1941

*W/-*

COPY

C/6240

LONDON. 15th April 1941.

C/D.

This is to let you know that my Code  
Section is now right up to date and it occurs  
to me that you may, therefore, judge it  
advisable on security grounds, to go slow  
with the creation of your own Code Section.

C.

ve.

S  
ag

of

them  
ands.

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

16 APR 1941

W/-

OFFICE OF THE WAR CABINET  
GREAT GEORGE STREET  
S.W.1

15th April, 1941.

SECRET

*This will mean further  
worrying, but I suppose the suggested  
meeting must be agreed to.  
10. 19/iv*

*My dear Jebb,*

dp  
Many thanks for your W/1951 of the 12th April. I am quite sure that the Chiefs of Staff are out to help you in any way they can, and I would not have any hesitation in answering the question in paragraph 10(a) in the affirmative.

The question in paragraph 10(b), however, is a rather different matter. Clearly nobody is in a position to assess priorities without knowing all the implications. It would, for example, be quite impossible for the Chiefs of Staff to give an arbitrary ruling that 16 technicians and 10 operators should be set aside for S.O.E. purposes without knowing the claims of other Services and businesses of these particular types of personnel.

My suggestion therefore is that we should arrange a meeting of the Vice Chiefs of Staff to which you and C would be invited, so that they might be given sufficient information to enable them to assess the relative merits of the various demands. Let me know if this will suit you.

In great haste,

Yours ever,

R.M.G. Jebb, Esq.

*H.2.18*

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

Most Secret.

12th April, 1941.

W/1951.

I hate to worry you at the present time but I think you ought to know that we are approaching a crisis in our development.

2. You will have seen from our Plans and Projects statement the various things that we want to do in Western Europe during the next three months. In addition to these various projects we shall want to drop as many "organisers" as possible in the occupied areas in order to foment disaffection and generally start the rot. There is no reason for me to tell you how important the function of such "organisers" is likely to be. On their activities may well depend the development of a situation which we shall ultimately put to our advantage from the military point of view.

3. At present we have, in various stages of training, something between 300 and 400 agents, and these will no doubt be increased as time goes on.

4. The short point is that few of our "organisers" are likely to do any good unless they are equipped with a W/T set and carefully trained in transmission and reception; this, of course, we can do, though we are experiencing difficulties even here. But however many people we may drop, so equipped and so trained, will avail us nothing, unless there is an organisation at this end which can take their communications in.

5. As you know, our wireless communications as a whole are at present carried by the S.I.S. over their system/-

Major-General Sir H.L. Ismay, K.C.B., D.S.O.,  
Offices of the War Cabinet.

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

- 3 -

could at the moment handle their traffic with fewer operators. Is it not, therefore, for consideration whether they should not be ordered by the Cabinet to hand over a certain number of operators and technicians to us at once?

10. It boils down to this :-

(a) Do the Chiefs of Staff attach real importance to the proposed activities of S.O.E. in Western Europe?

(b) If so, are they prepared to give S.O.E. a certain - very limited - preference over the other Service Departments?



system; and we are <sup>again</sup> told by "C" that he is not in a position to take any messages in from more than a very few organisers whom we may be able to drop abroad.

6. It is not, it appears, a question of lack of material, provided that the equipment for a new station, ordered by "C", in America, arrives safely, and is not sunk en route. The bottle-neck is simply in regard to operators and technicians. If, in fact, "C" is given 18 technicians and 40 operators in addition to his present staff, he will be able to carry the increased traffic which S.O.E. contemplate; otherwise, he will not.

7. I know that Lord Hankey is at his wits' end to secure enough technicians and operators for the Forces and that there is little, if any, hope of obtaining additional men through him. But this is partly due, I think, to the fact that he not unnaturally puts the needs of the Service Departments first and those of the S.O.E. second.

8. What, therefore, I would like you to do is to ask the Chiefs of Staff to give a ruling to the effect that the provision of at least 18 technicians and 40 operators to "C", for S.O.E. purposes, is a matter of overriding importance and must be given absolute priority over everything else. I do not think that, in making this request, we are really opening our mouths very wide, seeing that, unless we get at least this number of operators, we shall not be able to function in Western Europe at all, whereas the other Services, though they might go slightly short as a result, would certainly not be put entirely out of action, as we should be. Furthermore, the total number that we should require is a drop in the ocean compared to the total amount required for the other Services.

9. Finally, I should like to say that we have heard from other sources that certain Public Communication Companies such as, for instance, "Cables & Wireless",

could

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

**MOST SECRET**

12 APR 1941

w/-

C/6221.

LONDON.

11th April, 1941.

Mr. John Gladwin

SECRET

W/1979

12th April 1941.

Many thanks for your letter of the 11th April (C/6221), about communications.

I have duly embodied the minor amendment in the draft letter to Ismay, which you propose, and am now sending the letter off.

(Sgd) GLADWIN JEBB

"C"

"C". — I take it C/O has no comments; but I cannot get him on the phone. And short note to "C."

H. M. G. Jebb, Esq.,

Send H. letter to  
Gen. Ismay  
12/41

DD. 12/41

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

**MOST SECRET**

12 APR 1941

w/-

C/6221.

LONDON.

11th April, 1941.

My dear Gladwyn,

With your letter W.1954 of the 9th inst., you sent me a draft of a letter to Ismay.

I am in agreement with the contents, except that I would like the word "now" in paragraph 5, on the first line of the second page, changed to "again", in that I have repeatedly explained my difficulties regarding operators.

Regarding paragraph 6 of your draft, I am informed that the ship conveying the equipment has now reached a British port, but until it is safely installed one cannot be certain that it will suffer no mishap.

Yours ever,

*C*

? how despatch the letter, with  
the no minor amendment desired by  
"C". — I take it C/O has no  
comments; but I cannot get him on  
the phone. And short note to "C".

H. M. G. Jebb, Esq.,

Send Mr. Lister to  
Gen. Lister

*DD. 12/4*

12/4

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

Mr. Jebb's copy.

Also to: C.D.

MOST SECRET  
W/1954

9th April, 1941.

--- I send you herewith copy of a letter which I propose to write to Ismay about our communications. It should really have been typed out as a draft so do not hesitate to make any amendments that may occur to you. If, on the other hand, you think it is all right so much the better.

(Sgd) GLADWYN JEBB

C.

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

- 2 -  
Copy of this  
sent to "C."  
C.D.

for obs. to hear  
as a draft only.

9th April, 1941.

9/4.

Most Secret

1/1951.

I hate to worry you at the present time but I think you ought to know that we are approaching a crisis in our development.

2. You will have seen from our Plans and Projects statement the various things that we want to do in Western Europe during the next three months. In addition to these various projects we shall want to drop as many "organisers" as possible in the occupied areas in order to foment disaffection and generally start the rot. There is no reason for me to tell you how important the function of such "organisers" is likely to be. On their activities may well depend the development of a situation which we shall ultimately put to our advantage from the military point of view.

3. At present we have, in various stages of training, something between 800 and 900 agents, and these will no doubt be increased as time goes on.

4. The short point is that few of our "organisers" are likely to do any good unless they are equipped with a W/T set and carefully trained in transmission and reception: this, of course, we can do, though we are experiencing difficulties even here. But however many people we may drop, so equipped and so trained, will avail us nothing, unless there is an organisation at this end which can take their communications in.

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system/-

Major-General Sir H.L. Ismay, K.C.B., D.S.O.,  
Offices of the War Cabinet.



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8. What, therefore, I would like you to do is to ask the Chiefs of Staff to give a ruling to the effect that the provision of at least 18 technicians and 40 operators to "C", for S.O.E. purposes, is a matter of overriding importance and must be given absolute priority over everything else. I do not think that, in making this request, we are really opening our mouths very wide, seeing that, unless we get at least this number of operators, we shall not be able to function in Western Europe at all, whereas the other Services, though they might go slightly short as a result, would certainly not be put entirely out of action, as we should be. Furthermore, the total number that we should require is a drop in the ocean compared to the total amount required for the other Services.

9. Finally, I should like to say that we have heard from other sources that certain Public Communication Companies such as, for instance, "Cables & Wireless",

could /

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

- 3 -

could at the moment handle their traffic with fewer operators. Is it not, therefore, for consideration whether they should not be ordered by the Cabinet to hand over a certain number of operators and technicians to us at once?

10. It boils down to this :-

(a) Do the Chiefs of Staff attach real importance to the proposed activities of S.O.2. in Western Europe?

(b) If so, are they prepared to give S.O.2. a certain - very limited - preference over the other Service Departments?

Recommendations.

I attach herewith a memorandum to C.C.

for your approval and, needless to say,

for such additional and/or alterations as

may be required to make.

By this is that this memorandum should be

placed on the file of our paper by the Chiefs

C.C.

I have signed a few minutes  
before this in pencil

Q.V.

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

1. It is of course within the knowledge of the Chiefs

From C.D.

CD/XX/42

5 APR 1941

From C.D.

CD/XX/42

To C.E.O.

5th April 1941

Communications.

1. I attach herewith a memorandum to C. for your approval and, needless to say, for such additions and/or alterations as you may care to make.
2. My idea is that this memorandum should form the basis of our Paper to the Chiefs of Staff.

C. D.

*I have suggested a few minor amendments, writing them in pencil.*

*CD.7/iv*

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5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

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CD/XX/42

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C. D.

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necessary arrangements their end in regard to coding and cyphering; we are in process of engaging coding and cyphering people this end and of course their names will be submitted to you in due course.

It is unhappily the case these days that arrangements never go according to plan and whilst we are hopeful that

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

It is of course within the knowledge of the Chiefs

SECRET

CD/XX/336

5th April 1941

Dear C.,

Communications.

Referring to our talk of yesterday, I am attaching herewith a memorandum which - subject of course to your approval - may I think perhaps form the basis of a Joint Paper to the Chiefs of Staff.

Needless to say Gladwyn and I will be very pleased to discuss this with you again before we take the next step.

I may say that in my talk with Gambier-Parry yesterday we reached what one might call an internal agreement, under which I understood from him that, subject always to your approval, S.O.2 people overseas should be allowed to equip their secret agents with W/T and to endeavour to arrange that such agents should communicate with wherever S.O.2 headquarters may be in the particular country concerned (or in the case of the Balkans probably some contiguous country), provided always that we advise your people (if any) in the transmission centre and in the reception centre of the times and wavelengths etc. which we are proposing to use.

The wider question of contact in London with our agents in France, Holland, Belgium etc., I have endeavoured to deal with in the attached memorandum.

Finally, in regard to what one might call routine day to day communications, we are proceeding as quickly as possible along the lines in respect of which we have agreed viz., we have already received from the War Office the requisite number of code books and we have hopes, bar accidents, that we may get these out to their respective destinations without undue delay: our people in the Balkans and Near East tell us that they can make the necessary arrangements their end in regard to coding and cyphering; we are in process of engaging coding and cyphering people this end and of course their names will be submitted to you in due course.

It is unhappily the case these days that arrangements never go according to plan and whilst we are hopeful that



*Handwritten:* This is your copy  
1945

1945

we may get this arranged without undue delay, we must  
I think anticipate the usual maddening delays.

Yours sincerely,

*[Faint, mostly illegible typed text follows, appearing to be a letter or memorandum.]*

5th April 1941

S.O.2 COMMUNICATIONS.

1. [It is of course within the knowledge of the Chiefs of Staff that S.O.2 have a number of plans and projects,] <sup>the plans & projects which they have under preparation</sup> a weekly report on <sup>which</sup> is submitted to General Ismay.
2. S.O.2 have at present in various stages of training somewhere between 300 and 400 agents, who will be required to carry out such plans as may be finally approved by the Chiefs of Staff.
3. In practically all cases there is a vital necessity for one or more members of any <sup>party</sup> crew selected to undertake a plan to be equipped with W/T apparatus and to be trained in transmission and reception of such.
4. [Our] <sup>S.O.2</sup> Communications as a whole are <sup>at present</sup> carried by S.I.S. over their system and the position has now been reached where it is not possible for the number of agents which we may quite reasonably wish to employ in the near future to be adequately trained and equipped and the necessary arrangements made by S.I.S. for the reception of their messages as and when they arrive in the countries where it is proposed that they should operate.
5. The primary difficulty responsible for this state of affairs is lack of man power - in other words Technicians and Operators are required to a number of --- Technicians and --- Operators to enable S.I.S. to carry this extra load of highly secret and vitally important communications.
6. [We] <sup>therefore</sup> suggest <sup>as</sup> to the Chiefs of Staff that the matter has now reached a stage where <sup>they may consider it desirable</sup> [we must ask them] to direct the <sup>relevant</sup> Governmental Authority to approach Public Communication Companies, such as for instance Cables and Wireless, and to acquire from them and from

any other source which may be available such personnel as will enable the Communication difficulty as above outlined to be overcome. <sup>4.0</sup> <sup>1.0</sup> <sup>2.0</sup> We may perhaps add <sup>3.0</sup> that the Hankey Commission has <sup>have known</sup> had this difficulty (submitted to them, <sup>are</sup> but is unable to assist having regard to their prior instructions to <sup>repair</sup> a large shortage in W/T personnel which is at present being experienced by all three Fighting Services.

7. S.I.S. are not anticipating any difficulty in regard to equipment necessary for the reception of such Communications - provided always that the equipment for their new Station, which is at present en route somewhere on the Atlantic, arrives safely into port.

Mr. Jebb's Copy

W/1904

2nd April 1941.

May I refer you to your letter of the 21st March about the telegram from Barnes to Purvis which you kindly got the Foreign Office to send for us?

The reply is contained in New York telegram No. 274 of the 26th March, which has unfortunately only just reached me, as the Foreign Office copied it officially to the M.E.W. This telegram starts by saying that the Radio Corporation have no knowledge of the order referred to in the out telegram. Identifying details are requested.

The second paragraph refers to an order with a rather different specification. I learn, however, that there has been some misunderstanding, and this is very probably the order in which we were interested. No further action is, therefore, required, unless you consider it necessary to send a further telegram to New York to explain this.

Many thanks for your help.

30MAY (sgd) PHILIP BROAD

W.L. Gorell-Barnes Esq.,  
Offices of the War Cabinet,  
Great George Street,  
S. W. 1.

Mr. Jebb's Copy

Also to:- C.D.

SECRET  
1875  
20th March, 1941

SECRET

With the Compliments  
of the  
Under Secretary of State  
for Foreign Affairs

30 MAR 1941

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 1.

P. Broad, Esq.

Copy also to:-  
W. Brand (WCO)

W3343/55/49.

Decypher. His Majesty's Consul General. (New York)  
26th March, 1941.

D. 11.49 p.m.

26th March, 1941.

R. 7.50 a.m.

27th March, 1941.

INDEXED

No. 274.

Following for Brand from Purvis.

Ref. to letter of Mar. 27  
No. W3343/55/49

Radio Corporation have no knowledge of order referred  
to in your F.O.234. Please cable identifying details.

2. [grp. undec.] expressed to E.V. Truefitt  
March 20th who has since despatched by air to Signals  
Development Branch Herts 2 10 watts 450 volt triode valves  
for 800 megacycles known as development A-2139 under  
specifications sent to them direct by Signals Development  
Branch. This may be the order to which you have referred.

30 MAR 1941

W. (O.B.)

present state of communications) take some time.



Mr. Jebb's Copy

Also to:- C.D.

SECRET  
1941  
20th March, 1941

Secret

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

Mr. Brand  
Ministry of Economic Warfare

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be

With the Compliments of the

Under Secretary of State  
for Foreign Affairs

kept under Lock and Key

INDEXED

27 MAR 1941 DEPARTMENTAL No. 1.

W3343/-/49

Cypher telegram to His Majesty's Consul-General, (New York).

Foreign Office. 23rd March, 1941. 10.10 p.m.

No. 254.

0000000

SECRET.

Following for Purvis from Brand.

Signals Development Branch have ordered from Radio Corporation of America, an experimental five watt transmitting triode valve made to their own specification. It is understood that this valve is ready for delivery. Can you arrange for despatch by plane in the same way as was done in the case of articles referred to in my telegram No. 30?

RECEIVED

23 MAR 1941

M.E.W. (O.B.)

present state of communications) take some time.

Mr. Jebb's Copy

Also to:- C.D.

SECRET  
1947

Many thanks for your letter of the 18th March (C/6080), about the question of communications. I think this fully covers the points which we discussed when we dined with C.D. on the 18th March. As regards the use of a War Office cypher and that such communications will be sent by public channels, e.g. Cable & Wireless.

I note that you will let us know later on if and when you feel it would be a good idea for S.O.2 communications to go through your channels once more.

In the meantime S.O.2 will immediately set about endeavouring to form their own Communications Department here and in those countries overseas in which they are chiefly interested.

S.O.2 will send you copies of all inward and outward telegrams and no reference will be made to your organisation in any messages routed by this new channel.

It is not expected that S.O.2 will meet with any delay in acquiring a War Office cypher, nor in obtaining the requisite number of cypherers and decypherers here or overseas, but the reception

of the/-

"C".

(present state of communications) take some time.

of the codes the other end may (in the present state of communications) take some time.

In regard to the problem of secret W/T communication with Agents - I note G.P. is to have a talk with G.D. with a view to ascertaining if two-way traffic can be set up between any points, say in the Balkans, independent of your main line.

Rightly or wrongly my people, both here and abroad, are firmly under the impression that any attempt at such independent communication between S.O.S. and their Agents are strictly subject to G.P.'s permission, and that such was invariably withheld on the grounds of "security".

We can pursue problem (2) after G.P. and G.D. have had their talk.

In the meantime S.O.S. will immediately set about endeavoring to form their own communication system separate from and in those countries overseas in which they are chiefly interested.

S.O.S. will send you copies of all inward and outward telegrams and no reference will be made to your organization in any messages relayed by this new channel.

It is not expected that S.O.S. will meet with any delay in acquiring a new office space, you in obtaining the requisite number of operators and decipherers here or overseas, and the reception of the

of the

DRAFT.

Draft.

Dear C.,

Thank you for your C/6050 of 21st, which sets out quite admirably the points covered when we dined with C.D. on the 19th.

2 [ This will therefore confirm that you raise no objections to S.O.2. sending their official communications by means of the use of a War Office cypher and that such communications will be sent by public channels, i.e. Cables & Wireless.

When you are in a position to handle S.O.2. traffic promptly - I note that you will advise us to revert to the present system.

In the meantime S.O.2. will immediately set about endeavouring to form their own Communications Dept. here and in those Countries Overseas in which they are chiefly interested.

S.O.2. will send you copies of all inward and outward telegrams and no reference will be made to your Organisation in any messages routed by this new channel.

It is not anticipated that S.O.2. will meet with any delay in acquiring a War Office cypher, nor in obtaining the requisite number of cypherers and decipherers here or Overseas - but the reception of the Codes the other end may (in the present state of communications) take some time.

D R A F T.

-2-

In regard to the problem of Secret W/T Communication with Agents - I note G.P. is to have a talk with C.D. - with a view to ascertaining if two-way traffic can be set up between any points say in the Balkans independent of your main line.

Rightly or wrongly my people both here and abroad are firmly under the impression that any attempt at such independent communication between S.O.2. and their Agents was strictly subject to G.P.'s permission, and that such was invariably withheld on the grounds of "security".

We can pursue problem (2) after G.P. and C.D. have had their talk.

-----



DRAFT.

Not yet seen by  
M. B. Wf  
  
22 MAR 1941 Wf  
Central Office for North American Supplies,

From C.D.  
To C.E.O.

*I have slightly  
revised the draft.  
CD.*

24 MAR 1941 Wf  
CD/OR/954.  
24th March, 1941.

Communications.

I am returning herewith C's letter to you of March 21st, together with a very rough draft of the lines which your reply to him may perhaps take.

C. D.

DRAFT.

22 MAR 1941

Central Office for North American Supplies,

SECRET.

OFFICES OF THE WAR CABINET  
GREAT GEORGE STREET, S.W.1

21st March, 1941.

Mr. Sweet-Escott

I enclose a minute by Pyle about communications.

I am not at all clear whether I am expected to take any action on it, or if not, who is. Surely if it is expected that I am to act, the minute ought to have been addressed to me instead of to Byers, whom I confess I do not even know? Would you be so very kind as to make enquiries into this?

(Sgd) PHILIP BROAD

21st March 1941.

P. Broad, Esq.,  
Ministry of Economic Warfare.

DRAFT.

22 MAR 1941

Central Office for North American Supplies,

SECRET.

OFFICES OF THE WAR CABINET  
GREAT GEORGE STREET, S.W.1

21st March, 1941.

My dear Broad,

Just a line to let you know that we have asked Ashton at the Foreign Office to send off <sup>a</sup> telegram from Brand to Purvis on the lines of the draft enclosed in your letter of the 20th and to send a copy direct to you.

Yours ever,

*W. G. Baines*

P. Broad, Esq.,  
Ministry of Economic Warfare.

DRAFT.

Not yet seen by  
M. Broad.  
2/3

21 MAR 1941

Wf

**MOST SECRET**

C/6050.

LONDON,

21st March, 1941.

1. Coding. Top  
2. Obvt. Code. No 40  
3. Sending and to receiving  
4. Address and channel for hand  
over.

My dear Gladwyn,

This is to put on paper my views of the talk which we had on communications the other evening.

The problem divided itself into two parts:

- (1) The delay in the transit of S.O.2 Messages, on which you suggested that S.O.2 should send such communications in War Office cypher by public channels, i.e., Cable and Wireless.

On principle, I see no objection to this as a temporary expedient, and when I am in a position to handle the traffic promptly, I would advise you to revert to the present system. I would, however, stipulate that in routing your messages by this channel, no reference be made to my Organisation, as, apart from the cyphers not being, in my opinion, quite so secure as my own, the enemy will be automatically taking in all such traffic, and presumably be trying to solve the texts. I consider it essential, as you suggested, that I should receive copies of all such messages.

- (2) The problem of W/T Communication with agents.

I have discussed this with G.P., and he reports that there never has been any objection to inter-communication being set up, and all he has stipulated is that the scheme should be submitted purely for security reasons, in order that the technical aspects, such as wave-lengths, should be properly allocated.

I would, in fact, welcome any step which would relieve the strain in the Balkans, and if two-way traffic can be set up, say, between a Station in Yugoslavia and Turkey, independent of my main line traffic, this would be all to the good.

The/

+JLH/T

DRAFT.

- 2 -

The difficulty is to get any practical scheme submitted, and unless one can give guidance, I am highly dubious as to any project working satisfactorily. I have told G.P. to ring up E.D. and have a talk on this aspect.

You are aware of the difficulties in this country owing to the hold-up of essential material, but that is another story.

I am, however, absolutely opposed to any other Secret W/T Service being set up in the U.K. I fought long enough to try and maintain one Secret Service, and this would be another step in the wrong direction, apart from the unlikelihood of S.O.2 being able to set up anything for many many months which would give efficient results.

Yours ever,

C

H. M. B. Jebb, Esq.



DRAFT.

Dear C.S.S.,

Communications.

1. It has occurred to me that

*has yet been  
by Mr. Broad.  
21/3.*

21 MAR 1941

W/-

From C.D.

CD/OR/940

To C.E.O.

21st March 1941

I am attaching herewith a rough draft of a letter which it would be desirable for me to write to the C.S.S. in connection with our discussion the other evening at Claridges on Communications generally.

C. D.

it is  
ace in  
went for  
make  
e  
reater  
ative

DRAFT.

Dear C.S.S.,

Communications.

1. It has occurred to me that it would be to our mutual advantage if I were to put in writing the position we reached in our discussion the other evening in regard to Communications generally - and I assume that in the Interim you will have had an opportunity to talk this over with your experts.
2. There are I think obvious advantages to both C and S.C.2 if the latter were immediately to set about constructing a sort of subsidiary Communications Department, which would enable them to communicate with a number of their agents in various parts of the world by means of War Office Codes (passed of course by you), such telegrams to be sent over what I may call the Public System, such as Cables and Wireless, Great Northern and so forth.
3. If we can reach agreement of this principle it is naturally desirable that we should start in at once in endeavouring to assemble a Communications Department for coding and decyphering at 64 Baker Street, and to make such other arrangements as may be necessary by the decision that we should take over ourselves the greater part of our day to day communications as an alternative to passing them over S.I.S. lines.

4. I need hardly say that copies of all telegrams dispatched and received by such channels would be sent to you for your information and furthermore that any coding and decyphering clerks which we may be fortunate enough to obtain will of course go through the cards in the ordinary sense and thus the individuals concerned can be vetted by you.

5. In so far as what I may call the other aspect of our discussion the other night, vide Secret Wireless - this may take you a little time before you will have completed your consultation with your experts - but I think you saw some of the difficulties which are causing us to bring this matter up for the fullest possible discussion at this juncture, namely that our immediate plans in so many countries involve the placing of agents who, if they are to be of any use, must have secret communication with us.

6. Whether it will prove possible for us to equip our agents in many parts of the world where we may be operating with wireless sets and to arrange for the transmission and reception of secret communications, remains of course to be seen; but on the assumption that this proves possible the principle involved is to be your knowledge of and consent to our endeavouring to put this in force in such countries where we may be able to do so and where we shall not in any way upset your existing secret communications.

7. I know you will acquit me of any desire to hurry you into a decision, but things move so quickly these days that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the whole of our future plans are dependent upon increased wireless communication between our agents and our Headquarters and that the present basis is such that we feel unable to proceed with any certainty in the construction of our plans until we can see wider facilities for keeping in touch with the people we send out.

16th March 1941.

- 2 -

authority to have a considerable station of our own, and

C.D.

W/1838

I have read B's paper of the 16th March on communications and can only arrive at the conclusion that B has not read the "charter" to which he takes such strong exception. The relevant passage in that document (which, incidentally, was not, so far as I know, in the "charter" but an agreement dated 15th September, 1940, between "C" and what was then "D", as to their respective functions) reads as follows :-

"(c) Communications:

C will continue to afford to D such facilities for the use of S.I.S. cyphers and communications as the requirements and security of S.I.S. permit, but these communications will remain under the control of C. Should, for any reason, a telegram submitted by D, for transmission by C, be rejected by the latter, CD will of course be informed in which case he will endeavour to make other arrangements."

It seems to me quite clear from this that "C" agrees to put the facilities of his Communications Department (in which are included both ordinary telegrams to our representatives and wireless communications sent directly to any agents) at our disposal, subject only to "C"'s own requirements being met and to "C"'s security not being imperilled. There is nothing in the agreement which prevents us from organising our own communications and indeed, the last phrase suggests that we might well attempt to do so. The only reason why we did not at the beginning organise our own communications department was because "C" was quite able, at the time, to cope with our traffic and that we had no immediate prospect of any agents working in Western Europe for a very considerable period of time. Further, I always had the impression - perhaps the wrong impression - that our power to organise a system of wireless communication with agents on our own would be, in practice, restricted by our reception facilities, unless we could get

authority/-



16th March 1941

- 2 -

authority to have a considerable station of our own, and this, should have thought, might well present difficulties.

Anyhow, I believe that "C" has now agreed (a) to our having our own cyphers and to our communicating with our representatives abroad direct, and (b) to our trying out in the Balkans a scheme whereby we supply our own sets and our own operators for the purpose of getting in touch with dissident elements in over-run countries.

It is true that, according to the strict letter of the agreement, "C"'s concurrence in this is not necessary, but I am sure that it is highly desirable seeing that, if he so wished, he is still in a position to put considerable spokes in our wheel and that his able lieutenant, Colonel Gambier-Parry, is not only able but willing to put several more!

I should be glad to have your comments and those of E on the new situation which has arisen and on my interpretation of the so-called "charter", as set out above.

I should be most grateful.

(Sgd) GLADWIN JEEB

20th March, 1941.

Great George Street,  
S.W.1.

COPY. To C.D.  
From E.

16th March 1941.

W/1837

Telegram

20th March, 1941.

SECRET

Signals Development Branch have

ordered, from Radio Corporation of America,  
an experimental five watt transmitting

You will remember that you were good enough to help me some time ago in connection with an order is ready for valves placed in the United States. I wonder whether you could possibly do the same again? If despatch so, I should be most grateful.

The point is that we have ordered an experimental valve from the Radio Corporation of America. The order was in the name of the Signals Development Branch. Could you possibly get your people to telegraph to New York with a view to expediting the despatch of this valve in the same way as was done on the previous occasion? As the parcel will obviously be quite small I take it that there will be no difficulty about getting it put either on the clipper or on a bomber.

Might I suggest a telegram somewhat on the lines of the attached draft?

(Sgd) PHILIP BROAD

W.L. Gorell-Barnes, Esq.,  
War Cabinet Offices,  
Great George Street,  
S.W.1.

COPY. To C.D.  
From E.

16th March 1941.

March, 1

Telegram

To: NEW YORK.

Signals Development Branch have ordered, from Radio Corporation of America, an experimental five watt transmitting triode valve made to their own specification. It is understood that this valve is ready for delivery. Please arrange for despatch by plane in the same way as was done in the case of articles referred to in my telegram No.

This valve is required in connection with our Ultra-High wireless tests.

COPY. To C.D.  
From E.

16th March 1941.

SECRET

From C.D.  
To Mr. JEBB

OD/XX/911  
17th March 1941

PA/EL/925

19 MAR 1941  
19.3.41. W

TO: MR. BROAD

FROM: P.A.

Could you please have the following telegram sent to Washington:-

"R.C.A. have an experimental five watt transmitting triode valve made to ~~our~~ specification ready for delivery. Please collect and forward by quickest method."

This valve is required in connection with our Micro-Wave wireless tests.

P.A.

Signal Development Branch

COPY. To C.D.  
From E.

16th March 1941.

SECRET

Seen by PB  
2/3

From C.D.  
To Mr. JEBB

CD/XX/911  
17th March 1941

1. I attach a memorandum compiled by our wireless expert dealing with the question of "secret wireless" requirements in S.O.2 and touching on our difficulties with C. as they now appear to stand.
2. It does not get us much further, but may perhaps clarify our views preparatory to Wednesday evening when you and the C.S.S. are to dine with me and thereafter discuss, on the basis of a "fire side chat", the whole of this thorny question.
3. I have invited Bearsted to make a fourth, for his influence with the C.S.S. is very great.

C. D.



COPY. To G.D.  
From E.

18th March 1941.

1. An agreement exists, designated as "The Charter", by the terms of which S.O.2 agrees to be completely dependent upon "C" organisation for communications. This agreement must have been made without realisation of its implications. Security reasons do not permit our respective agents to meet in the field. The only way we can get communications over, therefore, is by putting our own men into territory with Radio equipment provided by "C" and by depending upon the capacity and willingness of the XW organisation at this end for receiving facilities.

2. To do our job properly we must employ a number of agents in this manner in enemy occupied countries. We are informed that the number must be limited (a) by the capacity of the receiving scheme; (b) by the fact that to increase the number to any extent will constitute a menace to security and (c) that we must not expect to have schedules allotted to us for the purpose of being able to report "having destroyed a bridge or a train". In order to obtain a suitcase set and a working schedule we have to submit our proposals to XW and they decide whether, in their opinion, the reasons given are of sufficient importance to be accommodated.

3. Dealing with the above in their order:-

- a) If this is so now, at the commencement of our expansion, the limit of our usefulness will soon be reached since we shall not be able to get access to our organisers except by coded letter correspondence.

b) The security of illicit wireless transmissions depends upon irregularity. It can be irregularity in time, in frequency, or in position. If it can be all three so much the better. Sometimes all three are not enough. I do not know what measures are adopted by XW as security precautions. I imagine they vary their frequency according to a preconcerted plan. It would be inconvenient to vary time on account of other schedules and equally inconvenient to vary position since their main routes are probably located in more or less permanently established premises. These main routes have a lot of traffic and would probably have more than one schedule daily. The above considerations do not apply to our agents suitcase sets. I think the menace to security has become a fetish. I opposed Wireless silence in the R.A.F. I have had experience in Direction Finding work and also at our own "Y" type of interception listening. Academically Direction Finding is regarded as easy. In practice an elaborate organisation is required. We know the number of hours that must be devoted to interception work before a modicum of useful information is gleaned. Our own G.P.O. engineers with their very complete organisation are by no means always successful. With any illicit transmission there must always be a risk of detection, but I regard the risk as a perfectly legitimate one properly associated with the job to be done and I do not see that the general plan is imperilled even if one installation is detected and caught.

- c) It appears that perspective has gone astray here. The proper function of any communications organisation is to serve the operational effort, not to control it.

4. In the Middle East we are faced with another agreement. We have had some suitcase sets sent out to Cairo by Bomber for transit to points to be decided upon by A.D. XW are holding up the delivery of these sets to our men until the men have been pronounced proficient by XW's representative and proper schedules arranged. I concurred with this decision as representing a true reflection of the agreement made before A.D. left. XW now say that it was also agreed that these sets were purely for use for intercommunication between our political troupes in the Territory and are not to communicate with their main line station at Istanbul. Their usefulness to us will therefore be curtailed by quite 50% when we do get them since there is no way by which we can get information home. I am not in a position to know whether this is a correct interpretation of the agreement made between XW and A.D. or not. I had not heard that part of it before.

5. In the Middle East our sets will not all constitute additional channels. The XW set has been evacuated from Bucharest and presumably also from Sofia. That leaves two channels vacant that might be allotted to our men who are being supplied with the sets for purposes of infiltration into Roumania and Bulgaria.

6. The average transmission delay over the telegraph circuits is very short, ranging from two to four hours. The average delay on our traffic, other than "Priority" at Codes War Station has risen from two days to four days

during the past two months. Only occasionally does one realise that there is an equivalent amount of delay on our outward traffic too. Unless, therefore, the subject matter justifies "Priority" marking it takes eight days to get an answer to a question and of this period only about five hours are needed for actual radio and line transmission.

7. I think we ought to get that "Charter" revised.

F. P.

10 MAR 1941

From C.D.

CD/XX/883

10th March 1941

From C.D.

To AD/A

CD/WL/267

12th March 1941.

"Whispers".

1. I attach copy of a letter from C. together with my reply.
2. I had a word with Brooks about this to-day and it was his suggestion that this should be discussed at Saturday's meeting at Woburn: I am sending a copy of this correspondence to D/Q, in case it is not your intention to be at Woburn this Saturday.
3. The subject is a complicated one (anyhow - and not the least part of the complication is as to who shall decide whether a "whisper" is both brief and of urgent importance - and a subsidiary point is as to whether S.O.1 shall approach the Foreign Office (the only other channel of communication).
4. At this juncture I spoke to you on the telephone, and repeat that I lean slightly towards passing this buck to S.O.1 and sending Hans Vischer back on Saturday morning with a message to C. from S.O.1 to the effect that they will endeavour to make their own arrangements with the Foreign Office in regard to the passing of these rumours through Foreign Office channels.
5. I feel that we should take up the attitude that we after all have nothing to do with these "whispers" except the dissemination of them at the other end when they have been manufactured and transmitted, and that we do not really come into this discussion, which to my mind lies between S.O.1 and C.

C. D.



W/

10 MAR 1941

From C.D.

CD/XX/883

10th March 1941

CD/WL/265

12th March 1941

Dear C.,

"whispers".

Thank you for your letter C/5978 of 11th March.

In confirmation of our telephonic conversation this afternoon - I am sending a copy of your letter to Charles Hambro with a request that he shall bring it up before the Joint Meeting of S.O.1, S.O.2 and others, which is held every Saturday morning to discuss the above subject.

I know that you appreciate that S.O.2 do not really come into this at all until the "whispers" have reached their destination, from which they are disseminated by means of our organisations in the various places concerned; in other words we do not manufacture the "whispers" and hitherto they have been transmitted over S.I.S. lines, so that strictly speaking this seems to be a matter really between S.O.1 and S.I.S.

I hope I need hardly say that any action I can take to co-operate with you in this or any other matter will most certainly be taken.

Yours ever,

10 MAR 1941

From C.D.

CD/XX/883

10th March 1941

COPY

S.I.S. Communications through C/5978.

MOST SECRET

LONDON,

11th March, 1941.

My dear C/D.,

I am writing to confirm that part of our conversation of Friday which dealt with the transmission of rumours by means of S.I.S. communications.

As I explained to you, our staff at Budapest has had to be decreased; Istanbul, in addition to its own work, is acting as the receiving station for the Balkan countries, whilst the staff at Athens are overworked and likely to become more so. This makes it absolutely imperative that we should reduce W/T communications to the minimum level compatible with efficiency, and for that reason I would ask that only such whispers as are both brief and of urgent importance should be sent to us for transmission through S.I.S. lines.

I feel confident that you will co-operate with us in this respect, and that rumours not fulfilling the above requirements will be sent through other channels.

Yours ever,

C.

W/  
10 MAR 1941

From C.D.

CD/XX/883

To Mr. JEBB

10th March 1941

S.O.2 Communications through C.

1. In continuation of my CD/XX/879 of 9th March, I enclose two "exhibits" which should be used and read in conjunction with the Memorandum above referred to.
2. The first is a copy of a telegram sent by C. to their representative in Cairo, from which you will see that five wireless sets, so urgently and vitally needed by our men in Belgrade and Athens, are still not to be released without authority from XW, which is Gambier-Parry.
3. In other words we are only allowed to equip these agents of ours, who, without wishing to use exaggerated language, are gambling with death every hour of the day, unless we have the permission of Colonel Gambier-Parry, safely ensconced in a Home County, whose decision may be based upon the caprice of the moment.
4. I further enclose a telegram from Vickers, dated New York 3rd March - and as you will see received at 54 Broadway on 4th March and delivered to us to-day 11th March.
5. I am very much afraid that we must make this a frontal attack, for it is absolutely impossible to continue the work of S.O.2 if we are subjected to this complete breakdown in communications - to say nothing of the other disabilities to which we are subjected and as to which I have written you fully in my previous memorandum.

C. D.

*At this end some which could be  
secured by CD. having his own staff*

10 MAR 1941

*W/F.*

S.O.2

MID EAST.

7.3.41.

Z Z Z

CXG. 529.

Following from XW.

Our CXG.473 of 23.2.41.

- A. Immediately W/T sets for S.O.2. arrive despatch  
two to                      and three to                      Retain remainder at  
your station.
- B. None, repeat none, of these sets are to be released  
to S.O.2. representatives without authority from XW. They  
are to be held by our representatives.
- C. Our CXG.149 of 30.12.40. refers to four of these  
sets. Two others should arrive or have arrived in  
addition.
- D. You may consult with S.O.2. representative as to  
best means of transport to
- E. Telegraph how many of these sets have arrived.

Origin VIII.

THIS IS A COPY  
ORIGINAL DOCUMENT RETAINED  
IN DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION  
3 (4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS  
ACT 1958